

## THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT US: "Oil and Water Will Mix"

**"S**naking northwestward from the Mississippi River," wrote the St. Louis Post Dispatch in April 14, 1974, "the Arkansas River Waterway . . . has resulted in the greening of Tulsa, now a livelier port than St. Louis. This major American inland waterway (once called) the 'boondoggle,' is becoming an economic 'boon' to Arkansas and Oklahoma."

The Post-Dispatch review of the waterway was among dozens that have appeared in national and international publications ranging from National Geographic to a trade sheet called Traffic World.

"The eastern part of Oklahoma," said Time Magazine, "has been transformed from dusty scrub land into an aquatic paradise."

"Its 679 square miles of water make its ratio of water to land higher than Minnesota's . . ."

"A land with plenty of room and abundant resources is opening up here in middle America," wrote U.S. News and World Report.

"A seaport in the plains?" asked Shreveport Magazine, which called the waterway "one of the most ambitious and

controversial public-works projects in U.S. history (and) probably the most expensive waterway built anywhere . . . four times the cost of the Panama Canal." It was predicted to return \$1.15 for every \$1 spent.

The Port of Catoosa, said the Shreveport Magazine article, "will link the Arkansas River with some 25,000 miles of inland and coastal waterways from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico . . . as well as foreign ports as far away as Japan . . . By turning the once-wild Arkansas into a placid waterway, it will open for development the rich resources of the so-called Arkansas Basin, up to now the only major region in this country without water navigation. What a storehouse of wealth is here."<sup>9</sup>

"This is truly an instance," wrote a trade publication called Handling and Shipping, "when oil and water will mix."<sup>10</sup>

And, concluded the Tulsa World on June 29, 1969, "Those who said it couldn't be done probably are the same ones who are saying nobody will ever walk on the moon."

**1971: The Tulsa-Rogers County Port of Catoosa, at the head of navigation, was dedicated by President Nixon and Oklahoma Gov. David Hall. Anita Bryant sang "America the Beautiful."**

